

REMARKS

In the aforementioned Office communication, claims 1-21 were rejected under Section 112 for specifically delineated reasons. Those rejections are felt to have been overcome with the newly submitted claims and, accordingly, the rejection is felt to be rendered moot.

Claims 1-21 were also rejected under Section 103 in view of various combinations of the patents to Langelier, Ozols, and Haines. The newly submitted claims are felt to be patentably distinct from the teachings in the aforementioned references for the reasons set forth hereinafter.

In the present invention, there are two embodiments disclosed, namely that of Fig. 1 and that of Fig. 5. Each embodiment utilizes a left and right guide cord, an upper and lower rail and a pair of compression-type spring tensioners anchored in either the upper or lower rail and wherein the left and right cords crisscross within the lower rail. It should also be noted the guide cords enter and exit the movable rails of the blind through open ends thereof and these features are felt to be captured in the newly submitted claims.

In the new set of claims, there is only one independent claim with that being new claim 22 wherein the claim references hollow upper and bottom rails having open left and right ends, a blind material attached to the upper rail and lower rail and extendable between them and wherein the upper rail, the lower rail, or both, are movable, a left and right guide cord that extend parallel to each other between the upper rail and the lower rail with the guide cords crossing over each other in the lower rail, the left guide cord entering the lower rail from the left end and exiting the lower rail from the right end and

the right cord doing vice versa, and further wherein each guide cord is operatively connected to a compression spring type cord tensioner with the cord tensioners being fixed in the upper rail or the lower rail of each blind in a dedicated longitudinal position while allowing compression of the spring.

Looking first at the prior art reference to Langelier, a sun blind is disclosed that utilizes a left and right guide cord which cross in the bottom rail, but the left guide cord does not enter the left end of the bottom rail and exit from the right end and the right guide cord does not enter the bottom rail from the right end and exit from the left end. Rather, the guide cords enter only one end and then extend upwardly to the upper rail. Further, the blind does not utilize compression springs but rather tension springs and while the examiner has equated the two in the aforementioned Office communication for reasons that will be set forth hereafter, it is not believed such equating is reasonable in that different results are obtained.

The reference to Ozols discloses a counterbalance spring system for a garage door wherein a compression spring is positioned within an outer housing and a cable is anchored to the outer housing at one end and passes around a pulley before exiting the housing. The Ozols reference therefore discloses a counterbalance spring means but it does not disclose a blind with a cord tensioner. While it is known that compression springs have been used for some time, in the Ozols system, the spring induces movement since it biases the garage door (12) toward an open position. This is achieved by connecting one end of the cord to the housing of the spring and the other to a lever (14). Also in the Ozols system, the opening or closing movement of the garage door influences the effective length of the cord. It extends while compressing the spring

when the door is closed allowing the lever end to which the cord is attached to move upward while the door moves down and shortens when the door is open allowing the lever to move in a reverse direction.

In the present invention, neither the left or right guide cord is fixed to the housing of the spring. Further, the cord has a single effective length, and the compression spring is at a certain fixed stage of compression, and neither are influenced by opening or closing the blind (see page 8, line 17-23 of the specification). Further, the spring is not biased to any position as does the spring in the Ozols counterbalance spring means. Accordingly, applying the Ozols systems to the Langelier blind does not suggest or disclose the present invention as set forth in the amended claims.

The Haines patent discloses a compression spring cord tensioner used in a window blind but the cord tensioner, as evidenced from Figs. 10, 11, and 14, is attached to the window frame rather than to a rail of the blind. Such a system is not very convenient inasmuch as special provisions need to be made in the window frame to accommodate such a compression spring cord tensioner. In fact, in other embodiments of the Haines system, as shown in Figs. 16 and 18, for example, when the spring tensioner is placed inside a rail, the spring is changed to a tension spring as opposed to a compression spring evidencing the fact that it is not an obvious matter to replace a compression spring with a tension spring or vice versa in the window covering art as previously suggested by the examiner. If it were an obvious exchange, Haines would not have had to change from a compression spring to a tension spring when placing the spring in the rail. Further, the tension spring utilized in the Haines system of Figs. 16 and 18 can move longitudinally inside the rail and thus can more easily cause a rail to

be skewed or tilted when the user does not grip the rail in the middle. By placing the compression springs in a longitudinally fixed position as in the present invention, the movable rail will always be kept horizontal.

For the aforementioned reasons, it is felt the prior art does not disclose or suggest a blind as now set forth in the newly submitted claims of the present application. The prior art does not disclose or suggest the possibility of placing a compression spring within the upper or lower rail. Compression springs are used in the prior art, but not within a rail; rather, compression springs are only shown used within the framework around a window covering. Further, the prior art does not disclose or suggest the concept of having the left cord cross the right cord within the bottom rail with each cord entering and exiting opposite ends of the bottom rail as set forth in the newly amended claims.

It was noted in a review of the application that the terms "retainer" and "returner" were interchangeably used and the specification has been amended herein to use only the term "returner" as in "cord returner 41".

There being no other objections to the specification and the claims now being felt to be in allowable form, it is felt the application is in condition for allowance and such action is courteously requested.

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Respectfully submitted,



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